



## Schoharie County Operations Review Committee

276 Main Street, Suite 2

PO Box 396

Schoharie, New York 12157

Phone: (518) 295-8303 Fax: (518) 295-8788

---

### Alicia Terry - Chair

*Gilboa Supervisor*

#### Harold Vroman

*Summit Supervisor*

#### Alan Tavenner

*Schoharie Supervisor*

#### Eric Stein

*President & CEO Cobleskill Regional Hospital*

#### Dan Crandell

*Public Works Commissioner*

#### Bonnie Post

*Director of Community Services*

#### John Riedl

*Superintendent, Margaretville Central School (Retired)*

### Schoharie County Operations Review Committee:

February 22, 2022

**Present:** Alicia Terry, Dan Crandell, Eric Stein, Bonnie Post, Harold Vroman, John Riedl, Alan Tavenner

**Also Present:** Steve Wilson (County Administrator), Korsah Akumfi (Confidential Secretary to the County Administrator), CJ Smith (Personnel Director), Mary-Ann Wollaber-Bryan (Treasurer), Scott Haverly (IT Director), Donna Becker (DSS Commissioner), Rebecca Stanton-Terk (Village of Cobleskill Mayor), Indy Jaycox (County Clerk), Bill Federice (Chairman of the Board of Supervisors), Warner Hamble (Cobleskill Town Supervisor), Suzanne Graulich (Director of Legal Defense of Indigents), Lisa Thom (Director of Real Property) and Kayla Redmond

Alicia Terry brought the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

Eric Stein moved to approve the minutes from December 13, 2021. John Riedl provided a second and the motion was carried 6-0.

Alicia Terry turned the attention to County Administrator, Steve Wilson to discuss his presentation "Stop Kicking the Can Down the Road: Fiscal State of the County III 2025 Initiative Q & A." Mr. Wilson started the presentation on page 3 where he discussed the three proposals to change processes and in time, create cost savings. Steve Wilson explained that there has been a growing awareness of issues within the County's budgeting process. For instance, departments are over budgeting and spending much less than what has been accepted into the budget. In addition, inflation is rising costs. This has created a lack of clarity and inability for the full Board of Supervisors to make informed financial decisions. Mr. Wilson explained that the reorganization was proposed as a way to accommodate the extra financial work necessary to correct problems and aide to better County operations.

Steve Wilson referenced page 5 which described the current system. He then referenced page 6 and stated that although Schoharie County is small in terms of population, it is mid-sized when it

comes to the cost of necessary resources. Mr. Wilson stated that the budget is way ahead of what this County needs and spends. On page 7, Steve Wilson spelled out what he feels is the ideal way to monitor the County budget and control costs.

Eric Stein asked how the County will handle unplanned, unbudgeted expenses. Steve Wilson explained that the Finance Committee must approve the expense first then recommend it to the full Board of Supervisors before it is finally authorized. Alan Tavenner indicated the need for the Board of Supervisors to follow specific procedures when it comes to unplanned costs.

Steve Wilson agreed with Dan Crandell that the Board of Supervisors should not rely on the Department Heads to manage the entire financial management process. He indicated that this sets up internal conflicts.

The proposal to reorganize the County government is much more fundamental and in line with other counties. Mr. Wilson stated that the current system that has been allowed to continue without evolving has begun to cause problems. By reorganizing, a new department will be created which will provide a separate audit function which will help to better educate the Board of Supervisors to make better financial decisions.

Steve Wilson stated that he considered three options before recommending the centralization and reconstruction proposal to the Board of Supervisors. First, he considered just purchasing a new software system. The problem with this option was that people would still be needed to enter the data and translate the information to find necessary trends, the software would not be able to do all the work the County needs. Second, Mr. Wilson considered adding employees to handle the level of analysis the County needs to manage the budget. He stated six new people would be required which he did not think the Board of Supervisors would approve. Therefore, he decided the most ideal option would be to centralize the financial functions, purchase a new software system, and reorganize positions to meet the County's needs.

Steve Wilson addressed the concern of hiring a deputy county administrator and addressed how it will contribute to cost savings. He then addressed concerns the Committee members have about the implementation phase and the loss of employees due to dissatisfaction.

Bonnie Post stated that it is important to look at the impact this proposal has on employee morale. The culture of the work environment is important to employees. She stated she would like to see an organizational chart to see what positions they are looking at changing and which departments will be affected.

The Committee members continued to share their thoughts on the proposal.

Alicia Terry turned the Committee's attention to questions and comments from the audience.

MaryAnn Wollaber-Bryan expressed her thoughts on the proposal. She discussed her concerns of not knowing what her role will be if certain functions are going to be delegated to this new department and under the County Administrator. She reiterated her thoughts to overcome the same result without having to reorganize and centralize the County.

Donna Becker briefed the Committee of her concerns about having employees who are reimbursed. She expressed the importance for the departments to continue receiving the funding to keep those employees.

The Committee decided to meet on March 14, 2022, at 8:30am.

Bonnie Post moves to adjourn. Harold Vroman provided a 2nd, and the meeting is adjourned at 10:00am.

Recorded by:

Kayla Redmond